

2 Balmoral Terrace
 St Vincent Place South
 South Melbourne
 8th Oct 1883

My dear Andrew,

Immediately on receipt of
 your letter of 21st I set to work
 to Conway. I drummed up Priestess
 Pally who lives at "Eglinton Villas" Merton
 Crescent South Melbourne. She ensconced
 me in her study with her and we
 discussed the situation. I found that
 Conway had gone to Ballarat and could
 not be seen till Friday evening when he was
 to deliver the third of his lectures. She
 could not inform me whether Tasmania
 was included in the programme, but said
 that his course had been definitely arranged,
 & that if that Colony had not been included
 in the course she did not think he could
 go there. She arranged to meet me at the
 Athenaeum Hall on Friday night & introduce
 me to him. After this we had a long peack
 on divers & manifold subjects in which we
 "surveyed mankind from China to Rome" In
 fact I don't know what on earth we left
 untouched. For the first time in Victoria I had

the sensation of being back in dear old
Göttingen, and I woke up accordingly.
About 9 o'clock she made some tea; and
it was nearly midnight before we
separated! I hope these proceedings won't
make you jealous. If you're going to take
Walter you must leave me Paddy - Is
this a bargain? No. So will then be relieved
of a great anxiety.

It will be as well to tell you at
this point of the visit that Walter & I made
to the Athenæum Hall on Tuesday evening
when Conway lectured on Emerson. When
the lecture commenced there was only a
limited number present. In fact, it was
a very poor show. We were very agreeably
impressed with the appearance & bearing
of the lecturer. He is a tall thin man
with an abundance of iron grey hair
on his head & beard whiskers & mustache
of a whiter hue. He forms a very
satisfactory realisation of an American
Gentleman & Scholar; and has a face which
seems to have borrowed something from the
homely goodness and majesty of simplicity of
Emerson. We were disappointed in the
lecture; and Mr Webster shares in this
disappointment. In the first place, his
voice has nothing of the orator's grace &

art. It is uncertain and retains hints
of his early Methodist training, joined
with slight, but unmistakable American
twang. In the second place, his arrangement
of matter lacked order & symmetry. His
details were fragmentary & jumped about
provokingly. He dwelt for about 2/3ds of
his lecture on biographical details,
and practically made the burning of
Emerson's house his peroration. What
we wanted to know was what he had
to say about the "Over-soul" & "Nature"
and his Anthropotheistic view of the Universe.
Cathrotheistic is mine - will it fit? But
beyond pointing out that Emerson had
foreshadowed by intuitions and presentiments
which had almost the dignity of prophecies,
that Evolution theory which Darwin, 25
years after Emerson's first distinct utterance
on the subject, founded on the rock of
Science - beyond this, and pointing out
that the word of Nature to Emerson was
that she was ever striving to perfect
herself in Man & that all things tended
to that perfection, there was not much
said about the real core of his teaching. The
room, too, was dreadful in its acoustic
properties; and this, combined with the
peculiar uncertainty of his voice, ^{often} caused

The ends of his sentences, to be unintelligible. I have no hesitation in saying I was disappointed. The audience though small was, I understood, a very cultured one, and I noticed by various signs that they were not held. Mrs Webster tells me that in private he is very charming. He is very full in his discourse, and lacks of his relations to and opinions of the great men he has met with attractive force & point. This is where I should like to meet him for I am drawn to the man qui man though not as lecturer. Mrs Webster also told me that Conway was stopping at Soorak & was so full up with engagements that she had not been able to get him to her house & did not think she could gain that pleasure during his stay here. It was thought that he would have preached at the Unitarian Chapel, but she also informed me he would not do this although he might attend the service next Sunday.

Friday evening was miserably wet but there was a larger audience than on Tuesday evening. I will not say anything here about the lecture which was Carlyle & Keero. Waship - save to say that it was much more interesting than that on Emerson, & a fresh arrangement of the platform & seats made his voice more audible. After the

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lecture due Webster met me as arranged & introduced me to Conway. There were a lot of people buzzing about him & I plainly saw that I could not do more at that time than give him your letter which I did telling him that if I could so far trespass on his time I would like to supplement the letter by a few words. He said the best plan would be for me to give him my address which I wrote on the envelope of your letter to him. He then shook hands with me & I vanished.

I was not able to see Conway again until Monday evening after the delivery of his lecture on "The ^{the attendance was large} Arise and Development of Religions". This was a splendid lecture and will be one of my best memories. His voice was more energetic and bold and his delivery more impassioned. I had received your telegram in the morning, but it was impossible for me to reply as I had nothing then to say. After the lecture I had an interview with Conway & his

Manager Smythe & Conway ^{to the latter} said
"I have received a lovely
letter from a gentleman in
Tasmania - We must go there
if there is any possible way
of doing it" - Smythe of
course approached the matter
from a strictly managerial ^{point of}
view and said he thought
he must have some guarantee
before going there. That he
must have a fair prospect in
both Launceston & Hobart
before he saw his way to it.
Ultimately it was arranged
on the suggestion of Conway
that they should discuss the
matter on the way to Launceston
where he lectures tomorrow night
(Tuesday) & Smythe promised to
communicate with me at once.
Conway seemed to be much
moved by your letter and
is evidently desirous of coming

over, but he is evidently so
placed that he cannot be
guided by sentiment or his
own predilection in the matter.
Still, that he is so moved
is something and I feel
very hopeful.

I need not say how fervently
I trust that he can go. If
there be anybody that can
feel to the full the meaning
of the desire which prompted
your letter - surely it is I.
If you knew how proud I
am of the opportunity of
rendering you any service in
this matter - but then you
must know, or I have become
something else to you.

I will take the speediest
means of letting you know
anything definite, and will stick
to the matter to that end -
howsoever, by the bye, said he will
write you in answer to your letter.

I send you an "Argus"
containing the text of his first
lecture, also a "Daily Telegraph"
containing a leader which will
amuse you - The latter paper
is the organ of the ultra-orthodox

Aaron's rod in the shape
of Gomway has swallowed up
all the others - I have only
room to warmly thank you
for your services in regard
to to avoid - and to beg you
to convey my best regards to
Mrs G & the usual salutation
to the 'Kinchins' -

I have endeavored to
obtain a portrait of Gomway
but he has not sat as yet
in Melbourne, and there are
no English ones in circulation.

Believe me
Dear Pachie
Always affectionately yours
A. G. W. Nixon